

Ward6 NPA

Sep7 2017 – Morgan Room, Aiken Hall, Champlain College

DRAFT OF MINUTES

Members present

Charles Simpson

Matt Grady

Members absent

Clare Wool

Ilir Hasa

Michelle Mraz

Start time 7:06

End time: 9:09

Note taker: Matt Grady

1) No minutes to approve

2) Open forum

Greg Epler-Wood

BT sale, read a statement from a petition in support of Keep BT Local bid

Provided more info on the co-op bid. 'Capitalization and debt' used as arguments against the co-op bid. Will borrow \$\$ to grow the business, but BT is profitable. Will spread throughout city, will be managed professionally.

Q: loss of \$\$ from earlier management, how will co-op recover?

A: \$16.9M was an investment in BT, it is part of the members' equity. Since co-op will be non-profit, earnings over expenses will be returned as dividends. All subscribers will become members. Also offers protection against rate increases – higher bids will likely require rate increases.

Q: does plan include cell service?

A: not in present business plan

Q: would co-op be able to manage?

A: will be professionally managed, just as now. Dormand and Faucett will be asked to continue management. Has grown from 3000 to 7000 subscribers. Staff will be retained.

3) Genese Grill, Save Memorial Auditorium

Assembly planned for sep26, discuss costs/plans to revamp

BT, City Hall Park, Mem Aud are all public commons, they belong to the people of BTV. Should be kept in trust for the people who benefit. In Barcelona/Naples/Grenoble, they have Departments of Commons; not for commercialization, privatization. Keep these assets for the community, don't lose potential gain for future residents. Many of these public resources are threatened; the public loses its voice once such assets are sold privately. Have a facebook page / website with much detail about history. Built in 1926, was important to the citizens at that time, need for a public performance space. Also a civic space for meetings, arts, dance. Bond vote several years ago, needed 60% to pass, missed by a small amt. Deferred maintenance neglected. \$8M estimate to get back in specification. City started discussions with UVM to tear down, build hockey rink. Public not involved in this discussion. Some people in city see as a liability, but other public spaces are being supported. \$3M for city hall park, \$2M-7M to tear down Moran, other examples. So city does have money for such projects. Also options for private philanthropy.

Q: anything happening now?

A: on back burner, not a city priority, closed and not in use...this is a proactive movement

Q: other NPAs engaged yet?

A: The NPAs have a role to create a forum for public discussion, all committee members of all NPAs involved. Organizing a meeting at Contois Sep26 6:30-8:30 for public comment/discussion. Will also have walkthrough for the public the day before. NPAs have also created a questionnaire for the public to provide information on their engagement with MemAud.

Q: Will the 9/26 meeting follow parliamentary rules, allow motions from the floor/etc.

A: That is expected, that motions will come from the floor representing the will of the public

Comment: Miller Center in north end was in very similar predicament, good example of what the public process can do.

4) David Schein, Keep the Park Green

2011, BTV City Arts got grant from NEA, 2019 is planned build

Want to open the design up more to the public. Lots of info on Great Streets website, very open. \$3M cost, removes central fountain, lots of negative feedback. Removes NE style town square. Replaces fountain with water 'squitter'. Also coffee kiosk, why commercialize center of park? Performance spaces also designed in, when there are also such spaces close by. No public bathrooms. Wider thoroughfares for crossings -> marginalizing homeless. Park lane (road) being built next to city hall. Would prefer a green space, more room for kids to play, playground, swing set. Flowers/gardens/trees, buffer against some of the urbanization ongoing all around. This design is more for larger scale city. Taking out several trees, would like a public process to decide the fate of some of these. Farmers mkt; will likely have to move, yet plan still has it in. Public process 'flawed'; would like the NPAs to look at this further, get real public input...alternative plans that cost less? Years of neglect have led us to this point. Maybe city council should take more input. Have a website/facebook with more info. Passed around an alternative design (from Karen Bates).

Comment: urbanism is not necessarily a pejorative term, increased concentration in well-designed urban areas is a good thing

A: true, but green space is needed as well

Comment: book by Peter Moskowitz, "How to Kill a City"...urbanization sometimes drives out people who used to live in cities, needs to take that into account.

5) Jim Holway, Marty Spaulding, future of BHS

(Spaulding) in 2014, HS was 50 yrs old, was designed for 50 yr lifespan

2013, rfp went out for redesign, Black River Design, much valuable input gathered...things put on hold at that point, analysis done on all district schools, bond went out for all of those other school needs...now back in design phase.

Goals: reduce travel paths, improve accessibility, simplify entry points, decentralize departments, centralize faculty offices, more gym space, cafeteria improvements, athletic support spaces for fields, stage/performance support space, reconfigured classrooms, address preventative maintenance needs (plumbing, electrical, etc.)

Challenges: unreasonable access routes, excessive travel, non-secure, excessive entrances, low performing thermal envelope.

Three options: 1) new building on baseball field...2) renovate existing footprint...3) partial demo and build around 'A' building

(Holway) Admin ready to startup design again. Small steering committee working on this, expanding to 'resource committee'...~30-40 members (staff, parents, citizens, other stakeholders, etc.). Producing a video on present state of building to show what the present challenges are, from the perspective of students. Committee will sift thru old work, reassess present state. What will be the future demographics, etc. Will likely be a big ask for the community, will be a public process, engage the community to find interest. Community engagement, pass to superintendent, goes to board, then board asks for funding. From BHS school webpage, about our school, renovation page there where you can add your name, etc. Lots of details/data on present work. OR: nextgenbhs.org

Q: are teachers on planning committee?

A: yes, and other parts of the process will involve teaching staff directly...this is just initial signup

Q: are students involved?

A: yes, student involvement in video, talking to 1<sup>st</sup> generation to middle school students (those who will be affected during the changeover)

Q: possible funding sources?

A: state of VT not taking applications/inquiries for such infrastructure work, not sure about federal sources yet

Q: all high schools will end football pgm, maybe the field will be available?

A: football field is a recent build, plus is used for other sports (soccer/etc.)...are talking about how to shift athletic fields around, that should be part of the plan

6) Anne Judson / Jeff Wick, School Board Update

(Judson) Teachers have decided to strike on Wed a.m. Started negotiating last October, did not get serious interaction until august. Salary, healthcare, operations were main points of discussion

Salary was going to be 2.4%/2.9% over 2 years

Healthcare: offer was 80%

Operations: elementary teachers need a breathing space, less lunch/front door duty...principals not so keen on this, want teachers involved at these times. High schools, wanted teachers to go to 53% classroom time (from 47%), could not come to an agreement here.

Open invitation to BTV BEA, not heard that this will be accepted

Q: (Linda Higgins) appears that board and BEA talking past each other, need facilitated conversation? Involve teachers, admin, staff, students? School has achievement gap that might be underpinning some of the disagreement. Need community level conversation?

A: (Anne) board has been trying to do this during the year

Q: board and bea close on salary/healthcare, but operations the main sticking point? Especially at the high school? Does imposing a contract undermine this process?

A: board is still open to negotiation, and operations is indeed a sticking point. Anne thinks they are close. Been at it for 10 months, other contracts to negotiate also, must get on with the budgets, can't change what has been offered.

Q: Dave Hartnett, Anne's ward...any talk of having open negotiations, open to the public?

A: this was asked, but not accepted by BEA

(Wick) Jeff was the one vote against imposition of contract. Just got on the board in April. There is a culture problem in the district, not listening to each other, not being collaborative. Extra time being asked of teachers is 3.75hrs/week by fiat, not collaborative. Propose admin/teacher process to come to these types of decisions. Need more face-to-face time with elementary teachers. Not being handled well, not a healthy process, need more collaborative approach.

Comment: maybe have BEA representation at next NPA

7) Joan Shannon, city council report

City hall park, on parks/arts/culture committee, agree to fund next phase of design. Not a 'road' in front of city hall, just an access path. Central fountain, part of historic nature of the park, maybe not that present fountain, splash jets may not quite cut it. Maybe something you could use to fill your water bottle, something sculptural. Did not put forward; that whole thing needs redesign. All NPAs have had meetings, have gathered input, so quite a lot of public input.

Two resolutions on quality of life issues. Mental health issues downtown very challenging, small number of people using police resources several times daily.

BT: have been lobbied by many with regards to Keep BT Local. City council has NDA, cannot discuss the offers.

What Joan can tell people is that there are criteria for sale that came from the public input, and that is what is being used to judge offers. 8 original submissions to BTAB, 4 put forward to City Council. BTAB is made up of citizens,

have good expertise available. Clem Nilan /David Provost went to visit some of the candidates. Joan has the criteria for sale, it can be found online (BT criteria for sale).

8) Sandy Yusen, Champlain College

Introduced SGA lead, Matt and Kyle AV support

Students back last Friday, convocation honored Tiffany Blumely “change the story VT”, economic opportunity for women

Thanks to neighbors for understanding during move-in day

Enrollment: 600 1<sup>st</sup> year, 69 xfer, 2100 students total (plus a few in Montreal, Dublin)

Housing options; leasing at 158 South Willard (29 students, one coordinator/staff), also 315 main street (7 students)...no longer at Bayberry place location...250 at Spinner Place in Winooski

Eagles Landing: on track for move-in fall 2018 (310-314 students). Weekly updates on website. Road closure week of Sep18 (Burlington Electric). Also waterline on St Paul this week

Some renovations/updates during the summer

Crosswalk safety: rainbow crosswalk faded, working with dpw on next steps, other safety measures possible. VTrans does not support custom crosswalks, so might have to standardize. But will be repainted...liked the rainbow message as a message of inclusion, might have to re-create somewhere else.

SGA (Christa Bennett) Cars don't always see students, students are getting bumped/etc., ask residents to have some awareness.

Comment: appreciate Champlain support of artist work on Haiti

9) Lisa Kingsbury UVM, Joe Sidell

(Lisa) Capital projects: large STEM discovery hall opened in spring, 2<sup>nd</sup> phase deconstruction of Cook science, new construction will continue to 2019

699 beds in new campus residence, has opened, 500 seat dining hall

Hospital building bed replacement as well

Slade hall, 29 bed residence on S. Prospect, under construction since spring, finish in next couple weeks

Athletic multi-purpose center, will go to board next month

(Joe) students, highest SAT/GPA ever in entering class, 13% students of color, 41 green+gold scholars, catamount commitment students, largest class ever

Neighborhoods: sending letters to students on quality of life issues, welcome bags to new renters, reminders about being good neighbors. Holding off campus workshops on city ordinances, landlord issues, etc. sending off-campus newsletter as well. Joint patrols with BPD Thurs-Sat night. Funding some BPD patrols for quality of life issues (overtime). Tracking where things happen in neighborhoods, will try to nip things in the bud. Also following up with landlords. Holding students responsible for off-campus issues...46 students suspended/dismissed last year for such issues. This works, not many repeat offenders. Please call with issues.

Comment: impressed with community work from colleges

A: thank you, are trying to work together

Comment: slade hall – any work on cooperative living ventures?

A: there were issues with maintenance, rodents, etc. res-life is looking to have more programmed housing on campus, however. Healthy lifestyle housing, commit to avoid substances, etc. hope that will help with retention.